

**Subject:** Today's Press - December 2, 2004

Below are highlights of today's press. Please use the papers' web sites to see the whole articles. If you want an article from the Wall Street Journal or Spokesman Review, call Susie Elwanger at (360) 236-4027. This message goes to all members of the Senior Management Team and the Program Management Team. Please distribute it more broadly in your office if you wish.

### [USA TODAY](#)

December 2

No DOH related news.

### **WALL STREET JOURNAL**

December 2

#### **OVER 40% OF AMERICANS TAKE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

The government reported Thursday that about 44% of all Americans take at least one prescription drug, and nearly 17% take at least three. Those rates have climbed from 39% and 12% as gauged for 1988 to 1994, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported.

#### **HEALTH SPENDING CONTINUES TO RISE AT A FAST PACE**

The rate of increase in the cost of health care appeared to be stuck in an uncomfortably high gear in the first half of the year, a new study shows. The finding suggests that health costs may continue to increase at unmanageable levels for employers and consumers. That outlook is distressing, because until recently the rise in health-care costs had appeared to be decelerating. The flattening of health-cost increases suggests health-insurance premiums will continue to rise at a similar pace.

#### **U.S. HIV RATES REMAIN UNCHANGED**

Nearly a million Americans now have the AIDS virus and the nation's ability to keep others from becoming infected still lags despite a government pledge four years ago to "break the back" of the AIDS epidemic by 2005.

#### **MOST US STATES NOT SPENDING RECOMMENDED ANTI-SMOKING MONEY**

Only three states - Maine, Delaware and Mississippi - are spending money on anti-smoking efforts at the minimum levels recommended by federal health officials, a coalition of public health groups said Thursday. Altogether, the states have set aside \$538 million for smoking prevention for fiscal 2005, which began in October and runs through September. That is just a third of the \$1.6 billion minimum the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say should be spent nationwide, says the report. The CDC's minimum funding recommendations for each state are based on population and other factors.

### [SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER](#)

December 2

#### [HEALTH COSTS GROW FASTER THAN REST OF ECONOMY](#)

Health care costs grew faster than the overall economy in the first half of this year, according to a study released today.

#### [A SOLEMN OBSERVANCE: WORLD AIDS DAY](#)

From Armenia to Zambia, thousands of activists turned out to sing in mighty cathedrals, light candles in city squares and march and hold dance-a-thons on World AIDS Day as the United Nations focused on protecting women and girls, often sidelined in the fight against the disease.

#### FLU-SHOT APPOINTMENTS BEING TAKEN FOR AT-RISK

At-risk adults can make appointments starting today for flu shots at King County public health clinics.

#### TIGHTER RULES FOR LEAD IN SEATTLE SCHOOLS' DRINKING WATER

Seattle Public Schools will apply a stringent standard to lead contamination in school drinking water, with the School Board last night adopting a measure that goes beyond federal recommendations.

#### HIV INFECTION RATE HOLDS STEADY

Despite the government's promise to "break the back" of the AIDS epidemic by 2005, about 40,000 Americans test positive for the HIV infection every year - the same number as a decade ago.

### SEATTLE TIMES

December 2

#### TIGHTER EMISSION STANDARDS PROPOSED

Washington state would follow California's lead in establishing tough new automotive standards to slash emissions of greenhouse gases under a proposed new bill.

#### HIV RISES 11% AMONG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN

The number of newly diagnosed HIV and AIDS cases among U.S. gay and bisexual men increased 11 percent in the four-year period ended in 2003, raising fears of a new outbreak of the disease in a group experts say has become increasingly casual about taking protective measures.

#### ABSTINENCE PROGRAMS CALLED MISLEADING

Many youngsters participating in federally financed, abstinence-only programs have been taught over the past three years that abortion can lead to sterility and suicide, that half of gay male teenagers have tested positive for the AIDS virus, and that touching a person's genitals "can result in pregnancy," a congressional analysis found.

#### WORLD AIDS DAY PROMOTES AWARENESS

From Armenia to Zambia, thousands of activists turned out to sing in mighty cathedrals, light candles in city squares and march and hold dance-a-thons on World AIDS Day as the United Nations focused on protecting women and girls, often sidelined in the fight against the disease.

#### MISTAKE CAUSES SEWAGE TO SEEP INTO PARK'S SOIL

It started with complaints of rank odors and backed-up toilets. It turned into a \$100,000 snafu that may cost the city of Seattle substantially more.

#### POSSIBILITY OF FAKE FLU SHOTS PROBED

Police and health authorities are investigating claims that a woman posing as a nurse set up flu clinics in three grocery stores in Whatcom County and injected dozens of shoppers with an unknown substance.

#### SEATTLE SCHOOLS APPROVE POLICY ON WATER QUALITY

After months of deliberations, the Seattle School Board approved a new policy to ensure all schools have some of the cleanest school drinking water in the country--at a total cost of more than \$12 million over the next three years.

#### THE NEWS TRIBUNE (TACOMA)

December 2

##### SEX ED COURSES FULL OF 'MISLEADING INFO'

Many American youngsters in federally funded, abstinence-only programs have been taught the past three years that abortion can lead to sterility and suicide, that half the gay male teens in the United States have tested positive for the AIDS virus, and that touching a person's genitals "can result in pregnancy," a congressional staff analysis found.

##### HIV INFECTION RATE HOLDS STEADY IN U.S.

Nearly a million Americans now have the AIDS virus and the nation's ability to keep others from becoming infected still lags despite a government pledge four years ago to "break the back" of the AIDS epidemic by 2005.

#### SPOKESMAN REVIEW

December 2

##### NUCLEAR WASTE INITIATIVE TARGETED

The Bush administration is challenging Initiative 297, a ban on additional nuclear waste imports to Hanford that was approved by 69 percent of Washington state voters on Nov. 2. "We are challenging the entire initiative as unconstitutional," said Blain K. Rethmeier, Department of Justice spokesman in Washington, D.C. In a brief filed Wednesday, the Justice Department says federal law governing nuclear waste shipments should prevail over state law and asserts "sovereign immunity" over the waste generated by weapons production.

##### MALPRACTICE INITIATIVE SIGNATURES SUBMITTED

Led by a father whose baby was badly injured during a botched delivery, a coalition of activists, labor leaders and lawyers submitted about 200,000 signatures Wednesday for an initiative to the Legislature aimed at reforming medical malpractice laws. "You need to hold everyone accountable – doctors, lawyers and insurance companies, if you're going to have meaningful reform," said Dylan Malone, whose son Ian died last May of injuries sustained at birth. "I said at Ian's service, I would honor his memory by trying to change the system."

#### OLYMPIAN

December 2, 2004

##### LACEY'S WATER PASSES THE TEST

The city won't have to permanently chlorinate its water after a crucial water sample tested clean. But it's not out of the woods yet. Three water samples collected in November tested positive for the presence of coliform bacteria. A fourth would have resulted in what state regulators call a "nonacute violation."

##### ADDITIONAL FLU SHOTS COMING TO AREA

A flu shot clinic for children will be Sunday in Lacey, and shots for adults could be available in Thurston County next week. Sunday's clinic will be from noon to 4 p.m. at the Pacific Walk-In Clinic, 3928 Pacific Ave. S.E., and is for children considered at-risk of complications from the flu. The clinic will have 500 shots available on a first-come first-served basis for eligible children.

##### WASHINGTON CLAM DIGGERS COULD GET 3 MORE DAYS

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife says there could be three more days for clam diggers to hit ocean beaches. Final tests for possible marine toxins will be conducted Monday, fish and wildlife officials said. If the clams are clean, four beaches -- Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis and Mocrocks -- will be open for clamming Dec. 10-12. During the first fall dig in October, diggers collected more than 400,000 clams along the Pacific Ocean beaches.

#### YAKIMA-HERALD REPUBLIC

December 2

No DOH related news.

#### TRI-CITY HERALD

December 2

##### WORLD AIDS DAY HITS HOME

In the candlelit darkness of the Northwest United Protestant Church, people gathered Wednesday night to commemorate World AIDS Day spoke aloud the names of friends and family members suffering from the disease, and those who have died. Jim House of Richland wiped tears away as he recalled a Thanksgiving dinner party in 1991. Of the 12 friends at that party, he said, all but two have since died of AIDS. "You put it out of your mind," he said. "But when you have an occasion like this, the grief comes back." (Benton Franklin Health District is mentioned in the article.)

##### FEDS: I-297 THREATENS TO HALT CLEANUP

Hanford cleanup could grind to a halt if a federal court does not block Initiative 297 from taking effect today, according to documents filed Wednesday by the U.S. Justice Department. The U.S. government is asking a judge for a temporary restraining order that it says is needed to let cleanup work continue, and also is asking that the initiative be overturned.

##### SPENDING URGED FOR ANTI-SMOKING PROGRAMS

Only three states - Maine, Delaware and Mississippi - are spending money on anti-smoking efforts at the minimum levels recommended by federal health officials, a coalition of public health groups said Thursday. Altogether, the states have set aside \$538 million for smoking prevention for fiscal 2005, which began in October and runs through September. That is just a third of the \$1.6 billion minimum the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say should be spent nationwide, says the report. The CDC's minimum funding recommendations for each state are based on population and other factors.

December 1

##### MOUNT ST. HELENS IS STATE'S TOP POLLUTER

Washington state's top polluter isn't a pulp mill, a power plant or refinery. It's the newly awakened Mount St. Helens. Since the volcano began erupting in early October, it has been pumping out 50 to 250 tons a day of sulfur dioxide, the lung-stinging gas that causes acid rain and contributes to haze. At peak, that's more than double the amount from all the state's industries combined.

#### WASHINGTON POST

December 2

No DOH related news.

## NEW YORK TIMES

December 2

No DOH related news.

## EVERETT HERALD

December 1

### NEW FLU VACCINE WILL BE RATIONED

Many local medical clinics will soon be getting doses of adult flu vaccine. Now the question is: Who will get it? The nearly 13,000 doses being shipped to Snohomish County are part of a national effort to ration flu shot vaccine to those at highest risk of serious health complications if they catch the flu. The Everett Clinic, which until now has not had any shipments of adult vaccine this flu season, is getting 7,000 flu shots for high-risk adults over the next few weeks. The clinic has used computers to help identify high-risk patients.